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NOTES AND QUERIES.

THE TALE OF THE WILD CAT: A CHILD'S GAME. — I may add two versions of the Wild Cat story contributed to No. XXXVI., January–March, 1897 (p. 80), by Maud G. Early, from Baltimore.

A. THE BLACK CAT.

T stands for Tommy.



S stands for Sallie.



Tommy built walls to his house.



Then he put in two windows to look out of.



And he put up two tall chimneys.



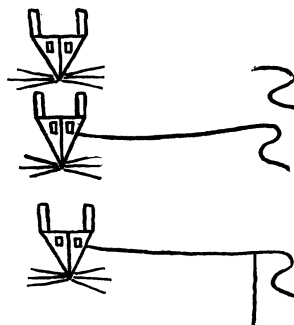
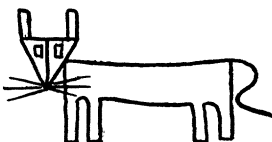
And he put a grass-plot at the door; the house was up on a hill, you see.



One day he thought he would like to go down and see Sallie.

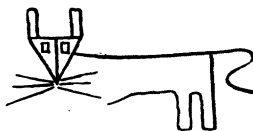
After he had talked with Sallie a while, they thought they would go down in the cellar (for some purpose or other, which I have forgotten. I cannot remember that the matter for which they went was emphasized; it appears to have been the going).

When they got down in the cellar, they went along a little way, and then they climbed up again and went they fell down went along a little up again; then way; then they and they walked along after that, and climbed up again, and the way far-down they again; and just a lit- and then



along a little way, and then quite a long way; then they way, and then they climbed they went quite a long, long fell down again, quite far;

along a lit-ther, and tumbled they went the farther, climbed up again; and then they





cried out, "O-O-O-O-O-O-O! See that *big* BLACK CAT!"

The cellar was usually spoken of as being a very dark place.

This story was told to me, with the aid of a pencil, quite frequently when I was a young child.

B. THE WILD-FOWL.

There was once an old man who lived in a house near a pond. Here is the house  and here is the pond. 

He made a back yard to his house.



The pond had a great deal of grass growing around the borders.

Two men came into the neighborhood to hunt and fish, and put up their tents.

As to the succession of events in the story, I am not clear. But the two hunters each make a journey to the pond, and either slay or capture a bird of some sort—if I am not mistaken, a wild-fowl—and



and the old man likewise makes a journey to the pond and back to his house. The story culminates by the old man's letting the water out of the pond, which, if I recollect, is done to prevent the future exploits of the hunters in that direction. He appears to exercise some sort of guardianship over the pond.

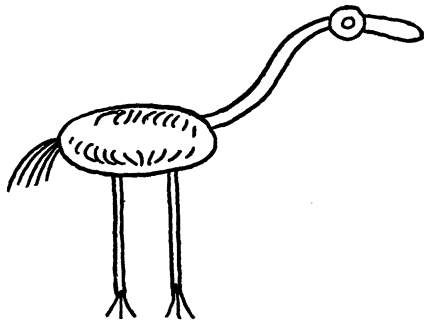


Here is the complete figure of the wild-fowl when the journeys of the hunters and of the old man are finished, and the water has been let out of the pond,—the figure of the bird which the hunters either captured or slew.

This story of the wild-fowl I have heard only once or twice, I think; but the story of the black cat was quite frequently told to me. The wild-fowl story always bothered me, because it is, as will be noted, scrappy; and I think that some connecting links must have been omitted.

A lack of unity is caused by the scene of action shifting from the old man's house to the tents of the hunters.

The inner circle in the old man's house was either a window or a door; but, if I remember correctly, I had to ask the narrator which it was intended for, and the answer was unsatisfactory.



It will be noted that the "S which stands for Sallie" turns the wrong way for an S. It evidently dates from a time long anterior to the printed letter; from a time sufficiently near to primitive times for animals to be

drawn as they invariably are by untrained hands,—from left to right, with the face turning toward the left. There was no other way for the cat's tail to point but as it does. I used to object, as a child, to the wrong way the S turned ; but the narrator always went calmly on. The myth of that cat's tail was too firmly grounded to be shaken by the protests of a child.

The "Wild Cat" of the story in the last number of the *Journal* and the "Black Cat" of the "Tommy and Sallie" story given herewith are doubtless more closely akin than at first sight appears. May I venture to trace out some of their possible relations ?

A well-known couplet runs : —

Whenever the cat of the house is black,
The lasses of lovers will have no lack.

(A statement perhaps borne out in the case of the Sallie whom Tommy goes to see.)

The popular belief that a young woman who is fond of cats will be an old maid is well known. In Thuringia, however, the girl who is kind to cats and makes much of them will marry first. These opposite beliefs are probably the reverse sides of the same mythic idea which makes the cat the symbol of the woman who is unappropriated by a legal male proprietor. In the primitive stages of society, when human beings herded like animals, marriage laws were unknown, and a woman was not necessarily bound by law to a husband as her proprietor. Advancing civilization, which evolved the legal obligation of a woman to be faithful to one man, also cast a slur upon the marriageable woman who remained independent and unattached to any one male proprietor. Hence the disgrace of being "an old maid."

Ida C. Craddock.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

THE MONSTER IN THE TREE : AN OJIBWA MYTH.¹ — The following myth was secured in the fall of 1894 at Peonagowink, which is situated on the west bank of the Flint River, in Saginaw County, Michigan. It was related in broken English by an old Ojibwa Indian, now an exhorter in the Indian Methodist church at that place.

In the time of my great-grandfather, in Michigan, a chief, having had a prophetic dream of what he should do, took twelve men to go to war with another tribe. A long distance from home, on their way, one of the men saw what he thought was a bear-tree and told the others of it, saying he thought there was a bear in it. Their leader examined the tree to see if it was so, and said it was not a bear-tree ; that a bear made a different scratch on a tree in climbing. After arguing with them, and telling them they need not go up to see, as he was sure it was not a bear, he found them still dissatisfied with his judgment, and at last allowed one of them to climb up to assure them.

One of the men then climbed to the hole near the top of the tree, and

¹ Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Folk-Lore Society, December 29, 1896.